

If a conflict arises between a Clinical Payment and Coding Policy (CPCP) and any plan document under which a member is entitled to Covered Services, the plan document will govern. If a conflict arises between a CPCP and any provider contract pursuant to which a provider participates in and/or provides Covered Services to eligible member(s) and/or plans, the provider contract will govern. “Plan documents” include, but are not limited to, Certificates of Health Care Benefits, benefit booklets, Summary Plan Descriptions, and other coverage documents. BCBSTX may use reasonable discretion interpreting and applying this policy to services being delivered in a particular case. BCBSTX has full and final discretionary authority for their interpretation and application to the extent provided under any applicable plan documents.

Providers are responsible for submission of accurate documentation of services performed. Providers are expected to submit claims for services rendered using valid code combinations from Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) approved code sets. Claims should be coded appropriately according to industry standard coding guidelines including, but not limited to: Uniform Billing (UB) Editor, American Medical Association (AMA), Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), CPT® Assistant, Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS), ICD-10 CM and PCS, National Drug Codes (NDC), Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) guidelines, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) Policy Manual, CCI table edits and other CMS guidelines.

Claims are subject to the code edit protocols for services/procedures billed. Claim submissions are subject to claim review including but not limited to, any terms of benefit coverage, provider contract language, medical policies, clinical payment and coding policies as well as coding software logic. Upon request, the provider is urged to submit any additional documentation.

## **Increased Procedural Services (Modifier 22)**

**Policy Number: CPCP013**

**Version: 1.0**

**Clinical Payment and Coding Policy Committee Approval Date: May 3, 2023**

**Plan Effective Date: August 15, 2023 (Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas Only)**

This policy is intended to serve as a general reference for billing and coding for increased procedural services. Health care providers (i.e., facilities, physicians, and other qualified health care professionals) are expected to exercise independent medical judgement in providing care to members. This policy is not intended to impact care decisions or medical practice. Note: This is not applicable to services billed on the UB-04 Claim Form.

## Description:

Modifier 22 is described by the American Medical Association's (AMA) Current Procedural Technology (CPT) as identifying an increased procedural service. Pursuant to AMA guidance, modifier 22 may be added to a service's procedure code in circumstances where the work required to provide a service is substantially greater than typically required for that service.

## Reimbursement Information:

Additional reimbursement may be considered in circumstances when the work effort is "substantially greater" than usually required. Use of modifier 22 is a provider's representation that the treatment rendered on the date of services was substantially greater than usually required. The use of modifier 22 does not guarantee additional reimbursement.

Thorough documentation indicating the substantial amount of additional work and reason for this work is required to support the use of modifier 22. For example, the report should briefly specify and summarize how the procedure was more complex than usual and also quantify how much more complex the procedure was as compared to the usual. A brief letter or statement that is not a part of the medical record is not sufficient to justify the use of modifier 22.

### Reasons for additional work may include:

- Increased intensity
- Increased time
- Technical difficulty of procedure
- Severity of the patient's condition
- Physical and mental effort that was required

**Modifier 22** is not justified by generalized or conclusory statements including but not limited to the following:

- Surgery took an additional two hours
- This was a difficult procedure
- Surgery for an obese patient

### Modifier 22 for Anesthesia

Modifier 22 may be appended to claims when access to the airway is limited (e.g., field avoidance), and the anesthesia work required is substantially greater compared to the typical patient. There is no modifier that identifies field avoidance. Documentation must support the substantial additional work and the reason for the additional work. Additional payment secondary to field avoidance is subject to the following:

- The documentation must be included in the member's anesthesia record.

- The base unit is less than 5 units, and
- The procedure is performed around the head, neck, or shoulder girdle, and/or
- The position requires a position other than supine.

### **Inappropriate use of Modifier 22**

The following is a list of examples where modifier 22 should not be appended and is not an all-inclusive list:

- If the additional work performed has a specific procedure code.
- Procedures that are prolonged or complicated by the surgeon's choice of approach, e.g., difficulty gaining access, hard to find vein.
- Procedures delayed or otherwise impacted due to equipment malfunction, e.g., lighting, or malfunctioning scope.
- E/M services
- Anesthesia services (with the exception of field avoidance as noted above).
- DME services
- Unlisted codes because their descriptions lack specific definitions.

### **Additional Information:**

- The additional difficulty of the procedure, how the service differs from the usual, should be detailed in the body of the operative report.
- Modifier 22 should only be reported with procedure codes that have a global period of 0, 10, or 90 days.

Failure to adhere to coding and billing policies may impact claims processing and reimbursement. Claims may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For additional information related to this policy, please refer to the Plan's website or contact your Network Management Office.

### **Additional Resources:**

#### **Clinical Payment and Coding Policies**

**CPCP010** Anesthesia Information

**CPCP023** Modifier Reference Policy

### **References:**

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Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Physician Fee Schedule Relative Value Files. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/medicare-fee-for-service-payment/physicianfeesched/pfs-relative-value-files.html>

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Pub 100-04 Medicare Claims Processing. Section 40.2 Billing Requirements for Global Surgeries. 10 Unusual Circumstances. Accessed 3/14/23. <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Transmittals/Downloads/R2997CP.pdf>

### Policy Update History:

Approval Date	Description
02/28/2018	New Policy
02/08/2019	Annual Review
04/02/2020	Annual Review, Disclaimer update
04/30/2021	Annual Review
02/24/2022	Annual Review
05/03/2023	Annual Review